CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Vincent Alternative Practice, AP-45-01-23

Proposed

Implementation Date 08/01/2023

Proponent: Chas Vincent, Vincent Logging

Location: S10, T26N, R32W, E1/2SW

County: Sanders

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Chas Vincent is requesting to place a skid trail within the 100-foot SMZ of a Class 1 stream. This would allow access to a portion of the unit that would otherwise be inaccessible. The building of the skid trail would also result in some sub-merchantable trees being damaged or removed. (See Attachment A-1)

A slash filter windrow would be put in place to minimize the chance of any material rolling into stream. Any material deposited in stream would be removed immediately. Grass seeding would occur after harvest activities to stabilize soil.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

NA

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

No other government Agencies have jurisdiction.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Action Alternative: An excavated skid trail would be constructed on the uphill side of the 100 foot Class 1 SMZ. A slash filter windrow would be placed below the excavated skid trail location to minimize the chance of material rolling into stream. Any material deposited in stream would be removed immediately. Grass seeding would occur after harvest activities to stabilize soil. Removal of sub-merchantable material and other incidental trees would occur to build excavated skid-trail. No slash piles would be constructed in the SMZ.

No Action: No excavated skid trail would be built in the SMZ. A portion of the unit would be left with no access legally available.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.
- Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.
- Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

Soils are mixed sandy and gravelly alluvium deposits. Due to steep slopes (>35%), and vegetation removal during construction of the excavated skid trail, the risk of erosion would increase. Mitigation measures to reduce erosion risk includes a slash filter windrow between the excavated skid trail and the stream and grass seeding after harvest activities are completed to stabilize soil.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

The excavated skid trail proposed to be implemented if the Action Alternative is selected would be located within the SMZ of a Class 1 stream. While the stream flows perennially and contributes surface flow to Rock Creek, it is likely non-fish bearing due to steepness. While the Action Alternative would require that a slash filter windrow would be put in place to minimize the risk of material rolling into stream. Any vegetation deposited in stream would be removed immediately by hand. Grass seeding would occur after harvest activities to stabilize soil and minimize the risk of sediment delivery into surface water. Due to the mitigation measures, the risk of adverse impacts to water quality would be very low.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

Project would involve minor amounts of slash burning. Slash from the whole logging operation will be treated during the fall open burn period. No significant impacts would occur.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

Vegetation in the SMZ consists of mixed conifer saplings with an understory of native shrubs, forbs and grasses. Approximately 125 feet of vegetation would be impacted by the proposed excavated trail. Minimum tree retention in the SMZ would be maintained.

Any disturbed areas would be grass seeded to reduce the risk of noxious weeds.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

The Action Alternative will improve the health of the timber stand and improve the overall habitat for wildlife.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

The Action Alternative, if selected, would not be expected to have a measurable impact to wildlife in the area due to the limited area. The Stream segment immediately adjacent to activity location does not support fish.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

None located in the immediate vicinity while conducting site inspection.

11. AESTHETICS:

Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

The proposed site will not be visible unless you walk up to it.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:

Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

No impacts anticipated.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:

List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

None are known.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.
- Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.
- Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

No impacts anticipated.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

Timber harvest would provide additional logs, continuing industrial production in the Western Montana area.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

People are currently employed in the wood products industry in this region. Due to the small size of this project, there will be no measurable cumulative impact from this proposed action on employment.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

Due to the small size of this project, there will be no measurable impact from this proposed action on tax revenues.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:

Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

Log trucks hauling to the mill would result in temporary traffic increase on Rock Cr. Rd. This increase is a normal contributor to the activities of the local community and industrial base and cannot be considered a new or increased source.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:

List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

There are no plans that would be impacted by this proposed activity.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:

Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

Use is expected to remain the same following the project. Recreational areas and wilderness are not accessed through the portion of the tract that the Alternative Practice would cover.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:

Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.

NA

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

NA

23	23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?				
NA					
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES: Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.					
NA					
	EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name:	Nathan D. Cole Service Forester	Date:	07/25/2023
	. ,	111101			
V. FINDING					
25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED: The Action Alternative is selected for implementation.					
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:					
No significant impacts were identified.					
27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:					
	EIS		More Detailed EA	X No Furthe	r Analysis

Plains Unit Manager Signature: David M. Olsen Date: July 26, 2023

David M. Olsen

Name:

Title:

EA Checklist Approved By:

